



Regional Studies Association
COHESIONPOLICY
Research Network

CALL FOR PAPERS

**LEARNING FROM IMPLEMENTATION AND
EVALUATION OF THE EU COHESION POLICY
LESSONS FOR A RESEARCH-POLICY DIALOGUE**

WHEN: MONDAY 13 JUNE 2016

**WHERE: INSTITUT D'ÉTUDES EUROPÉENNES,
UNIVERSITÉ LIBRE DE BRUXELLES (ULB)**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 12 MAY 2016

WORKSHOP FOCUS

The Cohesion Policy has had a major influence on shaping regional policy of EU member states in terms of governance, practices and funding: the implementation of this policy has been (and still is) a major challenge for policymakers, mainly considering the European need to recover from the crisis. Since many years, many research and evaluation have been carried out to assess implementation and impacts of the Cohesion Policy using different methodologies and approaches. In the 2014-2020 programming period, evaluation is a corner-stone of the new result-orientation proposed by the EU Commission; however, many concerns are emerging about different local capacities in implementing the Cohesion Policy.

Against this background, the seminar invites contributions presenting lessons learnt from the implementation and evaluation of the Cohesion Policy. These 'lessons' have to be 'policy-oriented' to further improve policymaking across Europe. The workshop outcome will be a 'book of lessons learnt' to contribute to the debate on the Cohesion Policy. After the workshop, selected articles will be collected in an eBook (with presentations and short articles) to be disseminated to the policymaking community and online. For this reason, contributions have to be policy-oriented and will be discussed with key-policymakers in Brussels.

This workshop is promoted by the [RSA Research Network on EU Cohesion Policy](#) and hosted by [CEVIPOL](#) and the [Institut d'Etudes européennes](#) of the Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB).

POLICY DISCUSSANTS

Speakers are invited to present their contribution to key-policymakers in Brussels. The following discussants have accepted our invitation and will act as discussants during the workshop:

- **Peter BERKOWITZ** (EU Commission, DG-Regio),
- **Mathieu FICHTER** (Member of the Crețu's Cabinet),
- **Andrea MAIRATE** (EU Commission, DG-Regio),
- **Jan OLBRYCHT** (MEP, EPP),
- **Wolfgang PETZOLD** (Committee of the Regions),
- **Magdalena SAPALA** (European Parliamentary Research Service),
- **Monika VANA** (MEP, Greens/EFA).

WORKSHOP TOPICS

1. Learning from the evaluation of the implementation and impacts of EU cohesion policy

What lessons can be drawn from practices of evaluation and implementation of EU Cohesion Policy? This is a more “reflexive” strand looking at evaluation plans, operational programmes and their underlying rationales looking for more general implications. Furthermore, the actual application of evaluations’ results on strategic aim and practice of the EU Cohesion Policy in EU member states will be discussed. This strand aims to cope with lessons learnt (and how to learnt) from the evaluation practice and EU Cohesion Policy ability to react to economic crisis, unemployment and public budget constraints.

2. Programming processes of evaluation: how to promote policy learning?

This second strands look mainly to current practices oriented towards strengthening of monitoring data quality, accessibility of statistical data beyond the EU Cohesion Policy implementation system for evaluation purposes, involvement of partners and stakeholders (participative evaluations), capacity building on both demand (Managing Authorities) and supply (independent evaluators) side. The objective is to discuss how evaluation practices can be conceived as processes of policy learning to maximize policy learning considering different purposes and actors involved (civil servants, politicians, academic experts, consultants, public opinion, etc.).

3. Evaluation techniques

How to improve relevance of evaluations according to the type of intervention? What methods are appropriate to evaluate EU Cohesion Policy? This third strand focuses on evaluation techniques and their transfer to and from other policies (e.g. official development assistance). The quality of evaluations and standards applied for them become a cornerstone to successful evaluations. Moreover, the emerging trends will be discussed as well as new methods for policymaking based on ‘behavioural insights’ will be introduced. The goal is to discuss different ‘tools’ in relationship to their capacity to promote, facilitate and enhance policy learning.

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

We invite research-based contributions with clear policy implications that explore one or more of the above themes. All interested researchers, PhD students and practitioners are invited to submit their expression of interest by email to Nicola Francesco Dotti Nicola.Dotti@vub.ac.be

The expression of interest should include a presentation of maximum 5 slides, an abstract of about 500 words and a short bio with full contact details of the Author(s). The expression of interest should:

- put the policy issue in wider context,
- briefly outline theoretical background and methodology,
- clearly explain policy lessons learnt that can be generalized in the framework of the Cohesion Policy.

WORKSHOP FORMAT, OUTCOMES AND DEADLINES

The workshop is conceived as an opportunity to present research-based contributions and discuss policy relevant lessons learnt with policymakers. The aim is to contribute in bridging the gap between research and policymaking. The workshop will be also the opportunity to develop a policy-oriented eBook that the Research Network will disseminate in the policymaking community. The invited participants and presenters will be asked to strictly follow these steps.

DEADLINE	WHAT TO DO	NOTES
12 May 2016	Expression of interest <ul style="list-style-type: none">- presentation (max 5 slides)- abstract (max 500 words)- short bio (2-3 lines per each author)	
25 May 2016	Materials to be presented <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Presentation using the RSA-CP format (max 5 slides¹)- Complete article (max 3,000 words²)	This version will be circulated only among participants and discussant. Both presentation and complete article are mandatory. Once accepted, the organizers will provide a PowerPoint template to be used by all presenters.

¹ The presentation has to be in MS PowerPoint, the limit of 5 slides is mandatory. One extra slide as cover with contacts is allowed. The Organisers will provide the layout that must be used.

² The limit of 3,000 words includes figures, tables and graphs (each account for 500 words). The reference list shall not be considered.

DEADLINE	WHAT TO DO	NOTES
13 June 2016	Workshop in Brussels	Each presenter will have 15 minutes to present policy lessons to be discussed with policymakers.
27 June 2016	Materials to be published - Final Presentation and article to be published.	
15 July 2016	The organizing committee will publish an eBook with all slides and short articles to be disseminated with policymakers. All materials will be published online on the Research Network website, publicly available. The Research Network is committed to disseminate materials to Brussels policymakers.	

The workshop on **Monday 13 June 2016** will start at 10 AM and end by 7 PM. It will begin with keynote talks followed by presentations from speakers. The participation is mandatory to be included in the final publication. Presentations will be grouped depending on thematic coherence to match discussants' expertise. Each of the sessions will include discussants (academics and policymakers) leading the debates and providing the Authors with feedback on their research.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- Participation in the event is free of charge.
- The workshop will take place at the Institut d'Etudes européennes de l'Université libre de Bruxelles, Avenue F.D. Roosevelt, 39 1050 Bruxelles (Spaak Room)
- Lunch, refreshments and beverages will be provided and the participants will be invited for an *apero* closing the workshop.
- Thanks to the financial support from the RSA we will be able to offer several travel bursaries for attending the workshop. Bursaries will be offered on a 'first come, first served basis.' If you wish to apply for a bursary or if you have any questions regarding your eligibility, please contact Marcin Dąbrowski: m.m.dabrowski@tudelft.nl. Please note that bursaries can only be offered to participants who are members of the RSA and fulfil one of the following eligibility criteria:
 - o are student or early career members of RSA,
 - o are associate (retired) members of RSA,
 - o are RSA member working in a Band B, C or D country³.

For any other inquiries please contact the local organizers of the workshop,

Dr. Nicola Francesco Dotti: Nicola.Dotti@vub.ac.be

THE RESEARCH NETWORK

The Regional Studies Association (RSA) Research Network on EU Cohesion Policy aims at providing a forum for debating EU cohesion policy, its effectiveness, impacts, paradoxes, and its future. Through the organization of a number of highly successful international workshops since 2011 and of several special sessions at the RSA conferences, the Network has succeeded in bringing together academics investigating EU cohesion policy as well as practitioners working with this policy at the EU, national and regional levels. The workshops addressed the key issues structuring the debate on the assessment of the effectiveness and impacts of EU cohesion policy as well as its reforms. The Network has created numerous opportunities for inspiring exchanges of ideas, has helped to foster new research collaborations and has led to joint publications.

³ For the purpose of clarity, only student and early career members in Band A may make a claim for expenses, while members in any other category of Band A are not eligible (see RSA website to check in which band your country is). Any claim for expenses being made by a corporate member (Bands B, C and D only) should note that their expenses can only be refunded to the organization holding the corporate membership. Bursaries can be used towards travel and accommodation expenses only. The bursary is redeemable on presentation of receipts for eligible expenses. Applicants are encouraged to minimize their costs by using economy fairs, budget airlines, sharing accommodation, booking economy hotels/hostels. Priority will be given to PhD students and early-career researchers as well as the participants having difficulties in securing their own travel funding.

Drawing on this experience, the Network continues promoting research on EU cohesion policy and fruitful dialogue between academics and practitioners with the aim to contribute to the on-going debates on the effects and the future of this policy.

NETWORK CO-ORGANIZERS

Nicola Francesco DOTTI (Cosmopolis, VUB), Fanny SBARAGLIA (CEVIPOL, ULB), Magdalena SAPALA (European Parliamentary Research Service), Oto POTLUKA (CEPS, University of Basel), Marcin DABROWSKI (TUDelft), Ida MUSIALKOWSKA (Poznan University of Economics and Business), Laura POLVERARI (University of Strathclyde).

For any enquiry, please contact Nicola Francesco Dotti: nicola.dotti@vub.ac.be

